



Bibliothèque universitaire
des langues et civilisations

An international-scale language library is about to open in Paris

The *Bibliothèque universitaire des Langues et civilisations* (BULAC) (Languages and Civilisations University Library) is to open its doors in Autumn 2011 in the new premises of the languages and civilisations centre, in what is now referred to as “Paris’s new Latin Quarter”, in the 13th *arrondissement*. The BULAC is making this location its new home – close to the *Bibliothèque nationale de France* and the new campus of the *université de Paris Diderot* – with the *Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales* (INALCO) (National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations).

The BULAC is a radically modern library which will be open to students and researchers, with seating for 360 persons in the research area, and more than 200 000 volumes freely available, rooms which can be booked for small groups as well as personal rooms, which will be available for use by researchers 24 hours a day. The aim was to create a tool suited to the particular needs of people conducting research from France and other parts of the world, providing them with comprehensive documentation on languages and civilisations at a single location.

BULAC’s administrative status itself makes it a unique establishment as it is a collaboration of eight partners*, bringing together universities, libraries and research centres which have consigned their document collections to the library. After its opening to the public, the second phase of the project will focus on opening premises close to the library to be used exclusively by research working groups.

The collections housed by the BULAC make up around two millions documents, 60 % of which are in their original language. The number of languages represented is far greater than the hundred or so languages taught at the INALCO, totalling, as it does, around 350. As well as these works in and on different languages, the documents concern the social sciences and cultural studies. All collections are envisaged to grow through purchases, donations and exchanges. Provisions are being made for a gradual increase in digital resources.

We are confident that BULAC will prove to be a vital resource for researchers, first of all through its Russian collections, but to the same extent for its materials for Indian, African, Japanese and Chinese studies, as well as for a variety of language-related areas which are not covered by other libraries in France. BULAC will also become the home of an important collection of periodicals, including a number of old and very rare journals.

The old books, including the historic collection of the *École des langues orientales* (School of Oriental Languages), and the rare manuscripts and documents, will be available for reference

in a specially fitted “Reserve” room, and will be assigned to areas not open to the public. The BULAC collection is hugely valuable for the history of the study of languages and that of oriental printing methods.

BULAC, which will be open to both researchers and to the general public, will endeavour to meet the increasing need for documents pertaining to linguistic fields which are unavailable in most other French libraries. It is currently drawing up agreements with several important establishments in France, including the BnF (National Library of France), but it also desires to establish partnerships and work together with Europe’s biggest libraries with similar areas of interest.

Francis Richard, scientific director at the BULAC
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<http://www.bulac.fr/>

* Among the libraries consigning their collections to the BULAC are the *Bibliothèque interuniversitaire des Langues orientales* (BIULO) (Inter-university Library of Oriental Languages), which is the biggest contributor, the *bibliothèque d’études iraniennes J. Darmesteter* (Iranian Studies Library), the Indian collections of J. Bloch, M. Biardeau and C. Vaudeville from the *École pratique des hautes études* (EPHE) (School of Advanced Studies), the library of the *Centre d’études slaves* (Slavic Studies Centre), the *Sorbonne* and Korean collections from the *Université Paris Diderot*. The BULAC collections will also comprise other major oriental collections from, among others, the *École des Hautes études en sciences sociales* (EHESS) (School of Advanced Studies in Social Sciences), and the *École française d’Extrême-Orient* (EFEO) (French School of Far East Studies).